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THE SECULAR PULPIT.

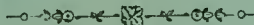
—A SERIES OF—

SHORT PATENT SERMONS,



By CALEB SIKES, P. M. P.

*Adapted to all times and all
places. Reading for
the multitude.*



BRISTOL, CONN.:
PRESS STEAM PRINT, MAIN STREET,
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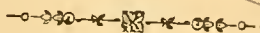
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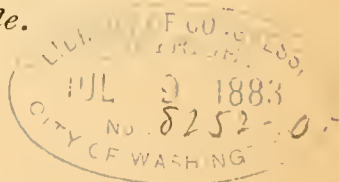
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My text may be found in Robert Burns's "Epistle to Davie," the first clause of the second verse:—

*It's hardly in a body's power
To keep at times from being sour,
To see how things are shared.*

MY DISQUIETED HEARERS:—"Things" are very unequally divided up, in this world; that is to say, according to the laws, customs, and usages of civilized nations one man can own an amazing quantity of land, a railroad or two, several legislatures and a big slice of congress, a church, and two or three daily newspapers, a bank or two, and as many fast horses as he chooses; while another man, who wears the same sized hat and boots, cannot own land enough to build a log cabin, and earns the bread he eats by pegging away from day to day at some trade or

profession. As the Scottish bard aptly expresses it, "It's hardly in a body's power, to keep at times from being sour," when we see some big nobody, who perhaps never did a square day's work at anything, rolling in wealth, while we, the common people, find it difficult to make our ends meet after a year of incessant toil and often of privation.

But, my hearers, it is one thing to see, or imagine, a wrong, and another to right it. I knew a man once who attempted to mend a hole in a coffee pot, and in soldering up one hole he melted two bigger ones, which he couldn't mend.

Now it is an easy matter to talk about monopolies and bloated bondholders, and railroad magnates, and bank nabobs, on the one hand; and of poor, laboring men, mechanics, mudsills, and plebeians, on the other. And then it is easy to form anti-monopoly leagues, trades-unions, and talk of equal chances, equal rights, agrarianism, communism, nihilism, and all the other isms, but what does it avail? Now, my acidulated hearers, suppose all the property in lands, buildings, stocks, money and offices, were equally divided among the whole of us, how would the case stand at first sight. Everybody would put on his best clothes and stand around waiting for somebody else to go to work, and this somebody else would say, "I am well enough off, let those work who like it." And if any of you, my beloved, can tell who would be the first man to roll up his sleeves and go in for the rough work, you have half solved this question.

But, suppose again everything was divided up equally, and the word was given, "Now boys you are

all on a perfectly equal footing, and here are equal rights, and equal chances for all, go in." I have seen a great many, in my time, sit down to a game of checkers. One man would have just as many men as the other, and their chances were perfectly equal. But, somehow, after a little playing, one player would have all the other fellow's men, and the other fellow wouldn't have enough left to start business on. Just how the thing is done cannot be told, but it is always the way, that one man comes out ahead in a race. How long would it take, my brethren, if property was all equally divided, for us to get back again about where we are now. To have everything just as we desire is a thing most devoutly to be wished, but just exactly how to get it, "Aye, there's the rub."

Our revolutionary fathers sought to establish a government upon the principle, "that all men were created equal," &c. But how it has worked let all these acidulated growlers testify. You see how it is, yourselves, brethren, and now if anything short of outright communism will place us all on a perfect (property) equality, and keep us there, let him who can explain what, now stand forth and testify.

But, my vainly ambitious and sorely deluded hearers, let me conjure you to take into serious consideration the glorious and divinely appointed system of labor. Show me a tribe of men who never labor and I will show you a tribe of the most miserable human vermin that root their subsistence out of the globe. Suppose a few men own a few railroads and legislatures each, it shows that they are smart. And how are they going to run their roads, without

employing an army of mudsills to do the work for them? Money will buy almost everything, and it would not be worth having if we could not spend it. And if a man is able to buy a legislature or two, and a few congressmen, let him invest his money in that way. I tell you, brethren, that Oakes Ames was worth more to build the first Pacific railroad, than a half dozen ordinary legislatures, with congress thrown in. Great deeds are accomplished by great means, and there is often more executive ability bound up in one man, than in a State House full of ordinary statesmen. Never mind a few magnates and nabobs. They do not go to seed, and when the crop is gathered somebody else has a chance. Dig away brethren. If you are at the foot of the ladder, contrive, if you can, to get up one round, and don't let go, either. It is letting the round slip out of your hand, where you fail. Get up a round, stick to it, and then go for the next one. We cannot all get to the top, and there will everlastingly be some at the foot; but go up earnestly, honestly, industriously, and without any sourness or grumbling, and

So mote it be.



My text for this occasion may be found in the words of the immortal Shakespeare, as contained in the tragedy of Othello, Act III, Scene 3.

It is my nature's plague

*To spy into abuses, and, oft my jealousy
Shapes faults that are not.*

Good name, in man, or woman,

Is the immediate jewel of their souls.

MY ERRING HEARERS:—These words were placed in the mouth of Iago, one of the meanest cusses which the mind of the great poet ever invented. Iago was one of those oily-tongued philosophers, whose eagle eye was ever spying into every act of friend or foe. He was almost an oracle, and in his volubility he uttered great truths and wise maxims, and he seemed to himself the very embodiment of

wisdom, while his plausible and ingratiating manners carried convictions wherever his insinuations directed them. He based his theories on facts, but when facts were lacking to carry out any plot which his mind had set afloat, he did not scruple to manufacture facts for the occasion.

Iago was no fool. He could read human character at a glance. He could tell a gossip as far as he could see one, and in playing upon great and noble minds his attacks were made upon their weakest points, and he seldom missed his object. He was even aware of his own weaknesses when he confesses, in the words of my text, "It is my nature's plague to sry into abuses, and, oft my jealousy shapes faults that are not."

My hearers, Shakespeare was a great man, although he attended theaters. He could climb higher, dive deeper, and hold out longer than any of our modern poets. He had an amazing faculty of discerning the true inwardness and outwardness of human character, and his dramatic works are better than any looking-glass ever invented. You can look into them and see yourself inside out, bottom upwards, or in any shape you desire. He calls things by their right names without any false modesty, and exhibits virtue in all its chastity and beauty, and vice in all its hideous deformities. Thus, my hearers, in the character of Iago, our great poet gives us all the lights and shades, the ins and the outs of the gossip and scandal-monger. Iago fostered mischief and peddled scandal just for the love of it. He aroused a jealousy in Othello by a pretended friendship for him, and

made him believe that Mrs. Othello was untrue to him, and kept company with another fellow. Othello was the very soul of truth and honor. Mrs. Desdemona Othello was pure, loving, and confiding, as every good wife should be, when she has a husband that knows a good wife from a poor one.

Little by little did the designing Iago infuse the poison of jealousy into the mind of the noble Othello, until he at length saw nothing in his pure and loving Desdemona but deception and treachery. Iago had no cause for malice towards his confiding friend Desdemona, and while playing the part of mutual friend between man and wife, he was continually laying snares for his unsuspecting victims, into which he drove them by his treachery. The tragic fate of Mr. and Mrs. Othello was a sad sequel to this unhappy scandal, and the whole story should inspire us with a hatred for scandal-mongers.

There are Iagos in every town and village, who stand convicted of "nature's plague, to spy out abuses and shape faults that are not." Scandal never takes the back track, but travels from house to house like the tramp, and at every house it visits something sticks to it, and off it goes for its next victim. Language is a great blessing, but it is cheap; so cheap that it is used for the vilest purposes. By its use the purest character in society can be covered with contempt. Some Iago gets a hitch on him and dogs his footsteps, and begins to hint that he knows something wrong about him. He gets some insipid gossip started, and soon nothing is too absurd for the people to believe.

And now, my dear hearers, let me tell you, do not say anything about your neighbor that you are not willing to write down and sign your name to. What you *believe* or what somebody else believes, proves nothing. Belief is not evidence; on the contrary it is a mere want of evidence. Stick to your legitimate business of telling what you know, and don't tell all you know either. You cannot make your own character whiter by spreading lampblack on somebody else. But there is one thing you can do with a clear conscience—tell all the good you know of anybody and everybody. It is as harmless as homœopathic pills. If it does no good, it will do no harm. Abuse gossip and slander with a conscientious zeal until it has no longer any power over the human race, and

So mote it be.



My text for this occasion may be found in Shakespeare's drama "Taming the Shrew," in Act II.

'Tis deeds must win the prize.

MY UNSCRUPULOUS HEARERS:—These words were part of an address which Shakespeare furnished for one of his characters in this highly characteristic drama. Baptista was an elderly, wealthy gentleman, of Italy, who had two daughters, Katharina and Bianca. It was not by any means a strange circumstance that one of his daughters was a shrew, and as such was not so attractive as the other, who, it seems, had two suitors who sought her hand. Having some difficulty between themselves, these two lovers appealed to the old gentleman to decide the matter between them. One was a young aspiring,

youth, and the other, though a little past his prime, was severely smitten with the charms of the lovely young Bianca. The old gentleman very complacently said to these two lovers, "Stand back gentlemen, I'll compound this strife, 'tis deeds must win the prize."

There is nothing in this world which is worth having, not even the favor of a young lady with a rich father, which is not worthy of the best possible effort. It is an easy thing to cultivate a moustache. It is an easy thing to smoke prime cigars, when you can get trusted for them. It is an easy thing to wear fine clothes, when your tailor will take your note in payment for them. It is an easy thing to make costly presents to the ladies, when you can get trusted on the pretence of having a rich uncle. But where solid deeds are required, "Aye, there's the rub." There is no doubt but that there is a prize package for everybody who offers deeds for its acquirement. There is no use in lying back and investing in penny prize packages, or buying lottery tickets, or waiting for some rich relative (which you never had) to die and leave you a fortune and a reputation. The chances are a thousand to one against you. Deeds are the only consideration for which you have any reason to expect rich returns, and the returns never can be expected to exceed the equivalent. The greatest failures in life arise from expecting too much and doing too little.

And now, my hearers, I will lay down a few specific rules, the most of which have been tried, and found to pay dividends. The first great secret of success in life is economy. This is a great word and express-

es more than almost any other word in our language. In the great world of nature nothing goes to waste. Everything which has existence fills its place, and however insignificant in itself, it adds something to the development of some higher form of existence, and nothing is too mean to be utilized in nature's great laboratory. Economy signifies making the best use of everything and allowing nothing to go to waste. This then is the starting point in life.

Waste no time. Time is the dividends we receive from the stock we hold in eternity. It is too valuable to waste. It costs too much to make it to throw it away or waste it in idleness and dissipation. There is a tremendous sight of machinery used in grinding out a single day, and when a day is lost you can never recover damages by any legal process.

The next use for economy is, never waste anything on yourself. If you have never bestowed any thought upon this principle of economy it is time you went to school. You have a certain freehold in this world in one certain piece of humanity which is represented by "I." It is now your business to make the best possible use of this possession. It requires a certain amount of covering to make it respectable in the eyes of the world. It is not respectable for a hundred dollar man to wear ten thousand dollar clothes. This is contrary to all rules of economy—or respectability.

Then you want to be healthy, vigorous and active. Here is where you can put in a great deal of study, and this is where you will get the largest dividends for your investment. The man or woman who is

well fed will seldom want a doctor or undertaker. You can get health, satisfaction, and peace of mind out of a very simple diet, costing a few dimes, while the man who lives sumptuously and intemperately pays a penalty on his enjoyments in headache, colic, and nightmare. A good physique with a clean character as well as a clean skin, is the best outfit to start in life with, that you can have. And then you will see, 'Tis deeds must win the prize, and you will be just fitted for winning. A suit of nice clothes covered by a mortgage, and a constitution enfeebled by too much mince pie, cake and wine, is a poor capital to commence life on, and will yield no dividends. There's nothing like health, and this you can have by pursuing the right means to obtain it and preserve it. The stomach never was made for a receptacle of all the rubbish of a grocery store and drug store. It was just calculated to carry along a half day's provision in. 'Tis deeds, done for yourself, must win the prize, as well as deeds of a more public nature.

My hearers, if every one took the responsibility of taking care of his own individual duties and interests this would be a very easy world to live in. It is this taking care of other people's duties and interests that wears upon you, wastes your time, and makes you miserable. If you want good company in this world, or any other, take good care and make yourself worthy of it. You cannot buy a passport into any better world than this, with any amount of ready cash. It is deeds must win admission. There are no complimentary tickets issued, and no

watered stock will be accepted at the ticket office.

My dear hearers, there is a great responsibility resting upon you individually in this matter of looking out for number one. It is a job you cannot let out to the lowest bidder. You have no business to abuse yourselves. You have intellects which should direct you towards your highest interests. You cannot cheat nature or nature's God. But you can cheat yourselves. Frame this motto and hang it in your dining rooms where it may admonish you continually:—

*“Stand back gentlemen, I'll compound this strife,
'Tis deeds must win the prize.”*

And so mote it be.



My text for this occasion may be found in Shakespeare's tragedy of King Richard the Third, Act V, Scene 4.

A horse! a horse! My kingdom for a horse.

MY DEAR HEARERS:—The horse is a noble animal, and in these modern times is greatly hankered after. It is not probable that in ancient or modern times, a greater offer was ever made for a single specimen, than that made by King Richard, and probably no one was ever in a greater hurry than he was at the time he uttered the memorable words of my text. Richard had been dissipating in ambitious projects, and found himself in a tight place and horsejockeys were scarce. What a chance for speculation, yet no one took up the offer.

But, my brethren, the horse of modern times is a peculiar institution. He is carried a little to excess. A good horse is a good thing, a very good thing; but he is estimated too much as politicians are, by his wind, and his capacity for getting over a good deal of ground and drawing fools after him. There are a great many people in a hurry now-a-days and some who, like King Richard would invest their whole kingdom in a single horse. But, my deluded friends, the fast horse, as such, is of but little account, except on the race course, for ninnies to bet their money on. It is the steady jogging animal who goes all day, and all the week and comes out fresh and strong, that you can get dividends out of. I dislike the word "fast" applied to anything unless it is a telegraph. Fast horses, fast men, and fast women are not the kind to take stock in. If I was fitting up a world to suit myself I would not have any of this kind in it. They do not improve society. It is not healthy for things to move out of their proper limits. A clock or a watch that should run two hours ahead of time every day would not be worth a rush. This is a fast age. It is. We are in too much of a hurry. We can't wait, and we become old before we know it. We eat too fast, we read too fast, we talk too fast, we ride too fast, we try to get rich too fast, and we die too fast. Now this hurrying business don't pay, my hearers. It will get you into a great many tight places, that you will be in as much of a hurry to get out of as King Richard was, and you may perhaps call as loudly as he did for a horse to help you out. Be deliberate, my irrepressible hearers. Don't try

to get ahead of time. The race is not always "To him who fastest runs." Keep cool, and when the race of life is run you will find your reward.

So mote it be.



The subject of my discourse is contained in the following text:

*“Tobacco is an Indian weed,
And from the Devil did proceed,
It wastes your money, scents your clothes,
And makes a chimney of your nose.”*

MY INCORRIGIBLE HEARERS:—The language of my text is of doubtful origin, but it was undoubtedly wrought into its present poetical form under inspiration from King James I., of England, who, in a “Counter-blaste” on the use of tobacco, declared smoking “loathsome to the eye, hurtful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and the black, stinking smoke thereof nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit which is bottomless.”

My text asserts that "Tobacco is an Indian weed," which appears to be a fact, in relation to the European races and their descendants. And it further asserts that it "From the Devil did proceed," so that his Satanic Majesty must have introduced it among the Indians for an experiment.

About three hundred years ago it was discovered by Europeans, transported to Europe, and introduced into civilized society. From its use for smoking among a few savage tribes found on this continent at its discovery it has spread to all parts of the world, and is now just about as prevalent as original sin. Estimates have been made that the present consumption of tobacco for smoking, chewing and snuffing amounts to about four and one-half pounds per annum for every inhabitant of the globe.

Without attempting to prove the poet's assertion as to the origin of the weed, I will leave this part of the subject by saying that it seems a work highly creditable to the profession of a devil, and I do not see how the devil he could get along without it, and it seems highly appropriate that he should make his first experiment upon a race of savages as a means to its further introduction among mankind.

But the waste of the thing is the point to which I wish to call your profound attention, and this waste appears not only in money but in energy and morals. But, my incorrigible hearers, I do not expect to convert a sinner of you who has the habit of chewing or smoking fastened upon him. I expect you to carry this little evidence of your early smartness with you until the undertaker pays his last respects

to you. But what I most expect of you is that you will teach your sons that it hasn't made you half as smart as you expected, that it has cost enough to buy anywhere from a library to a farm, that it never did a farthing's worth of good, and that it sticks to you closer than the multiplication table. Think of this, ye slaves to a dirty habit, and say if you wish your children to become slaves. Then think of the quantity of tobacco for ten years' consumption, all in a pile, and yourself chewing away upon it, or puffing it away in smoke. It is not a thing to feel proud of to have such a habit haunting you at all times and seasons, and then it is not always convenient to spare the money from your family or your creditors which this appetite calls for. It isn't pleasant to think you were fool enough to be led into such a habit, but you console yourself with the idea that it does not make you drunk, and you say you can give it up when you choose to, therefore I will not try to reclaim you.

The amount of business energy expended in the production and manufacture of tobacco is enormous, and the amount of capital invested can not be computed, but it would exceed our highest calculations; and all this industry and capital is employed without the smallest equivalent of good to mankind. I am a great deal happier without my cigar or quid of tobacco than you are with it, and I know that I am physically better for being without them. Tobacco is worse than useless to me. So it is to you. It is useless to everybody. A pig won't touch it. It makes an elephant mad. A goose can't bear it, and the smoke of it is said to kill snakes. It is too rank

for medicine, and the doctors do not use it on their patients if they do upon themselves.

Now, my aspiring young hearers, let me tell you that it was not the chopping down of a cherry tree that made Washington great and honored. It was not cigars nor fast horses that made General Grant president. It is much better to let your father's cherry trees stand and find something else to tell the truth about. It is a pretty good rule never to do anything for which we may be sorry. It is an easy matter to form a habit which will curse your whole lives, but it will not remove the habit to be sorry that you formed it. You may in an unguarded moment commit an act which will stain your character for a lifetime, and no amount of sorrow will restore your own self-respect. Keep on good terms with your conscience. I wouldn't give a cent for a borrowed conscience to do business upon. So don't borrow, nor lend. Don't starve your conscience into the idea that tobacco will make you smart, or that it will not do you any hurt. If you can't get any good out of a thing let it alone.

So mote it be.



My text for this occasion may be found in an address recently delivered by Herbert Spencer, before an audience of his admirers in New York:

“The American, eagerly pursuing a future good, almost ignores what good the passing day offers him, and when the future good is gained, he neglects that—while striving for some still remoter good.”

MY INCONSIDERATE HEARERS:—There is a large amount of truth expressed in this remark of Mr. Spencer's. He has been a close observer of American manners during his short visit here, and he speaks considerately, and not reproachfully, of this peculiar characteristic of the American people. He does not even suggest a remedy. He knows too well that America would cease to be America without the practice of the gospel of push and money-making. He

points to the consequences of over-worked muscles and over-worked brains. He says: "exclusive devotion to work has the result that amusements cease to please, and when relaxation becomes imperative life becomes dreary from lack of its sole (soul?) interest—the interest of business."

The English of this is, my hearers, that we, as Americans, are too much in a hurry to enjoy the blessings of life. Eight, ten, twelve, fifteen hours of devotion to business, fatigue, rest preparatory to a repetition of the last day's experiences, three meals so hurriedly swallowed that we forget the next moment what has been eaten or whether we have eaten at all. We pocket the bank notes which represent all this labor, spend it for—we hardly know what—and this is life—and, we try to believe, enjoyment.

My hearers, we are living in high-pressure times. America is a high-pressure country, but in all this bustle of business, and "getting a living" as we call it, we do not realize what we are passing through. The great end of life is to get a living, or, in other words, money, as this represents everything else, and in this scramble for money we become insensible to a thousand blessings by which we are surrounded, and perhaps remain in ignorance of a thousand unseen and unknown dangers. We make money by rule and spend it at hap-hazard. We are limited in the accumulation of money by the equivalent which we may have in time or brains to exchange for it, and it comes to us, as a general thing, in small doses, much too small to satisfy our greed for it. But is it not astonishing, my improvident hearers, how slip-

pery it is! Trying to hold live eels is nothing to it. It is here; it is gone; it is nowhere as to ourselves, and the next thing is to get more. And so we work and work, and hope and hope, for something better, which hope keeps us spurred up to efforts to keep afloat, and if possible to "get ahead." Getting ahead, though, is an up-hill business, unless we happen to have rich fathers, rich uncles, or rich wives. It is so easy to spend money, and it is so hard to get it, it keeps us in a perpetual hurry. If we go anywhere we are in a hurry to go and in a hurry to get back. If we lose an hour by a delayed railroad train the loss is irreparable.

There is a better way of doing things, my hearers, if we could but once adopt it. It takes pluck, though, and it takes brains. With all our "Yankee kalkulations" is it not a little strange that we do not calculate so as to have a little more to show for all this hard, unceasing drudgery? We ought to be ashamed of ourselves to tug away at this rate, just for our victuals and clothes. There is a screw loose somewhere in our calculating machine. It leaks, and we can't find the hole just because we are in too much of a hurry to keep the dish full. Work is a good thing; money is a good thing; but, what a pity that it comes so hard and goes so easy, and what a pity it is that credit is so much easier to obtain than money. Money itself is only evidence of debt. It only signifies that somebody owes somebody else, and somebody, as soon as he gets it, passes it to the next man. A good smart dollar bill started out in the morning, may pay a hundred dollars' worth of

debts before night, and return at night to roost where it started from in the morning.

Now, the better way is, keep out of debt, this will be the first step to opulence—keep out of debt. Perhaps you never felt the joy of being out of debt, but try it. It takes pluck, but try it, and when you have once conquered yourself to this system, you will not be in half so much of a hurry. You can then take things coolly and the world will be all smiles to you. If you happen to have a ten dollar bill you will know who it belongs to, and you can laugh dull care away. If you happen to be hungry, buy what is necessary and best, and pay for it. If you want clothes, buy them only when you can pay for them and leave a balance of cash on hand. Keep cool. Haste results in waste. It makes friction and you lose motive power by friction. There is nothing like having cash on hand. This better way involves the most thorough system of book-keeping and in all your transactions keep up the credit side. Be honest with your neighbor, and owe him nothing but kindness, because this you can always pay at sight and have a balance left. Be honest with yourselves. You may become so indebted to yourselves as to be hopelessly bankrupt, and the more you are in a hurry the deeper you are in debt. You owe it to yourselves to be sober, temperate, and wise, and no cheating. A balance here on the credit side makes the best show possible. It is better than bank deposits or railroad stock, and it pays better interest than Credit Mobiliers.

And finally, my brethren, when you come to settle up your last account and strike a general balance, you will find it a great convenience to be able to show a balance of cash on hand.

So mote it be.



My text for this week is selected from Robert Burns' "Poem on Life," a part of the second verse :

*O what a canty world were it,
Would pain and care, and sickness spare it;
And fortune favour worth and merit,
As they deserve.*

MY COMPLAINING HEARERS:—The Scottish bard was wont to rail at the world and fortune, for not rewarding merit as it seemed to him to deserve. Burns was conscious of the two warring elements in his nature—the lofty, sincere, loving, devoted, and pious nature, inherited from pure old Scottish stock ; and the grumbling, peevish depraved nature of the debauchee. Into his poetry he breathed all the varying lights and shades which lie between these two extremes. How, in his "Cotter's Saturday Night"

he paints, as none like him could ever paint, in glowing, truthful, enchanting poetry, a life scene, combining all the elements of love, purity, and christian devotion, every line of which, touches a chord in the human soul. And then again, with the same artist's skill, he weaves even his bacchanalian revels into bewitching poetry, which makes even his worst vices seem virtues. We cannot but look with pity upon a nature so overwrought with the poet's gift, to see it perverted, and debauched by the damning vice of inebriety. And how bitterly he himself bewails it.

*Ah Nick! ah Nick! it is na fair,
First showing us the tempting ware,
Bright wines and bonnie lasses rare,
To put us daft;
Syne weave, unseen, thy spider snare
O' hell's damn'd waft.*

But, my hearers, we are all imbued with this complaining spirit, if not in the extreme, at least in a degree. We growl and complain ceaselessly, because pain and care and sickness do not spare us, and because fortune does not (in our estimation) reward our merits as they deserve. And, like poor Burns, we indulge in those very excesses which entail upon us the evils of which we complain. There's hardly a mother's son or daughter of us, who will sacrifice a little gastronomic pleasure to save ourselves a great deal of pain and sickness. We eat, and drink, and chew, and smoke, and snuff, and guzzle, and swallow quack medicine, and medicine by due authority, and "yarb drink," and use plasters

and poultices, and faith cure, as though our happiness, present and prospective, depended upon how much we crammed into our stomachs. And then, my brethren, just see where the point of this great practical joke comes in. We work, eight, ten, twelve, and perhaps sixteen hours, out of the twenty-four, to earn the money to pay grocers', doctors', and medicine bills. And all this for what? Abusing the stomach, "only this and nothing more." What is the first thing we do when we are sick? Why we pitch some compound or other into the stomach to drive the devil, disease, out of the stomach. Did you ever think, my dear deluded hearers, how much abuse is heaped upon this poor old scrap bag the stomach, and how mercilessly we allow our dear little cherubs to cram confectionery and all sorts of goodies, from morning to night, thus polluting the very source and spring of health and laying the foundation for pain, care, and sickness, for a life time—a life time of slavery to a perverted appetite? We pity the poor drunkard and the wine bibber, for his slavery to appetite, and we mourn as those without hope, over the annual death rate of this unfortunate class. But do we ever take into the calculation how much of this evil is but the maturing crop from the seed sown in the nursery, the kitchen, and the pantry? And could we but know, with approximate accuracy, the dietetic abuse, we should stand appalled at the picture presented.

My hearers, we are a set of stupid grumblers. We know how to feed calves, and how to make them all live and keep healthy, and we have not the common

sense of a gray goose in the matter of feeding our children and keeping them alive. We bury about half of them away out of sight and make providence debit for this dispensation, and mourn over those little shoes, and little socks, and playthings, and wonder why Providence is so unkind, and try to be reconciled.

*O, what a canty world were it,
Would pain and care and sickness spare it.*

And why in the name of common sense, can we not learn to reason from effect to cause sufficiently to see our own malpractice upon ourselves. How long must we preachers worry ourselves, and wear ourselves out, to teach the world the plainest principles of common sense in regard to self abuse. And also to teach, that if they want "a canty world" to live in, and a world in which merit will receive its deserved reward, to begin at home, each for himself.

Finally, my hearers, what a gigantic subject it is for contemplation, that of all the crimes, and miseries, and degredation, and quarrels, and the sickness, and the suffering, and every abomination which curses mankind, an overwhelming majority of all these are traceable to an insanity engendered by an abuse of the stomach. Intemperance is the curse of all curses, and all are contaminated with it. Some of the most intemperate men preach temperance and prohibition. We cannot wipe out this curse by law alone. The curse of dram shops may be abated by extreme legislation, but the appetite remains, and the ignorance remains which lies at the foundation of the evil.

But, after all, the world moves, and the fittest survive, and to them this is "a canty world," besides being a world of considerable cant and hypocrisy. But it moves, everything is astir for developing the best and the fittest, in every department of life. Half-way, bungled-up jobs do not stand against this critical age. We are working towards the grand solution of the great problem of human life, and we are learning in a measure to estimate human needs and human frailties. We learn by experience, though we are dull scholars, but learn we must. A backward movement is hardly possible. The grumbler will wake up some time to find himself left behind. Great changes are effected suddenly, and often unexpectedly. The spirit of reform is abroad and is wrestling with wrong and outrage, and the right will ultimately prevail, and reason will triumph over self-imposed insanity.

So mote it be.



The subject of my text, this week, may be found almost everywhere, and the greatest trouble is, to keep out of its way. It is

The Locomotive.

MY DISQUIETED HEARERS:—In the early days when Sikes, Jr., was a small boy, no locomotive engine had ever trod the solid earth. Mankind, and woman unkind, had to go on foot, ride on horseback, or in some kind of a vehicle drawn by a 10:20 horse or a 20:10 pair of oxen. People in those days were not in such a hurry as now, and a journey of ten miles was made with much contentment by oxomotive power. Men, women and children, out in the country, would condescend to ride in an ox-cart, and it was not an uncommon thing for men, and women too, to undertake a journey of a mile or more

on foot. In fact, it may be said truthfully, that it was then fashionable to walk. But along about A. D. 1825 people began to get in a hurry, and Father John Bull began to rub his eyes and wondered what he should do. People were tiring of staying at home but it took much time to go abroad. So says Father John one day, "I will give any man £500 to build a locomotive steam engine that shall not cost over £550 and that shall not exceed six tons in weight and shall draw three times its own weight 10 miles an hour." John thought he was safe in making so magnificent an offer, but in 1829 four steam locomotives were ready for trial for the prize, by four different parties. One of these balked at the start. The next started off well but the boiler fizzled out. The next one left the wire in good shape and attained a speed of 15 miles an hour, with a nineteen-tons load, but it balked. The successful engine, named the Rocket, shot off at a steady gait of 14 miles, drawing seventeen tons after it, and, when hard pushed on a straight track, nearly doubled that speed.

What an achievement was this. Never was a prize of £500 more fairly earned; everybody got in a hurry, Uncle Sam hitched up his suspenders and began to lay tracks, and about the middle of the year 1829 three locomotives were imported from England and first waked the echoes among the hills and valleys of Pennsylvania, and were started at hauling coal in connection with the Delaware and Hudson canal. And they did haul it too.

And now, my hearers, just look back a period of

fifty years, and, you that can't, look back as far as you can. A half century isn't much, but just note the changes. In 1832 about 131 miles of railroad track had been laid in these United States. Now we have about 100,000 miles strung out over every state and territory in the Union. The locomotive now goes screeching and puffing over rivers, through mountains and over mountains, through cities and over the tops of cities, and under cities, not at ten miles an hour but at the rate of a mile a minute. Great ponderous monsters, weighing, not $4\frac{1}{4}$ tons like the Rocket, but weighing from 25 to 75 tons, and hauling its tens of thousands of passengers, daily, and an amount of freight which puzzles arithmetic to estimate. The locomotive is the most abject servant. It doesn't balk—not often. Ring-bone, spavin, glanders, and epizootic do not trouble it. It goes through storms, tempests, snow banks and fire, whenever the engineer says "Go." And then, my hearers, how cheaply it works. It will haul you a barrel of flour, or a bag of wheat or corn, 1000 miles, cheaper than you can get it hauled 15 miles by horse team. You can have your garden patch, your wheat field, your fruit orchard, your fuel, your illuminating oil, in fact everything you want, to eat, drink or wear, a hundred or a thousand miles away, and the locomotive brings it to your door, almost, at a cost so trifling that it seems impossible such service can be done at a paying profit. But all this comes from the concentration of capital, labor, brains, and the locomotive. And yet the locomotive is king. It rules over all. It neither

fears God nor regards man. It goes bellowing and howling through your streets, across your streets, ceasing not, day nor night, and you have only to keep out of its way. It regards not blue-laws, or Sunday laws, but makes its own laws. It breaks your slumber or it breaks your bones, almost with impunity. It disturbs you at your private devotions, it disturbs your public worship on Sundays. It respects not saint nor sinner.

And now, my long-suffering and subjected hearers, the locomotive is a usurper and a tyrant, and what are you going to do about it? But at the same time it increases the value of your property wherever it goes, unless you happen to have a farm for it to romp through. It does your hard dirty work at a small cost. You can live in half a dozen cities at the same time if you choose to, and come home at night to roost, but you can't control it any more than you can the cost of green peas on the planet Jupiter. It shuts the mouths of dragons, congressmen, and legislatures. It drives your stock to water and takes the grass leaving you the water. It does everything a tyrant can do, and still we hug it to our bosoms and could not live without it, or as Peter Pindar expresses it in his "Ode to the Devil:"

*"And yet your ways so very winning,
And men so very fond of sinning,
We cannot live without thee."*

And now, brethren, having set forth some special truths in regard to the locomotive, I leave it to your consideration, and if you can relieve yourselves from its worst evils, and preserve all its best possibilities, then

So mote it be.



My text at this time will be readily recognized as the production of Scotland's erratic, but highly renowned poet bard:—

*“The honest man, tho’ e’er so poor
Is king o’ men for a’ that.”*

MY DISTRUSTFUL HEARERS:—There are some in this world so cynical as to deny the existence of an honest man. An ancient gentleman by the name of Diogenes is said to have searched long with a lantern by day and by night for a single specimen, but without success. Diogenes died long ago but the demand for lanterns has continued to the present day.

The author of my text was a man of perception, and he seemed to recognize the existence of “the honest man,” but fails to mention his name. But

he says of him, that, "Though e'er so poor he was king of men for a' that," thereby assuming that poverty was no bar to honesty. But he asserts that honesty raises the poor man to the dignity of a king. The scarcity of kings at the present time seems to indicate a low state of honesty. Then the precarious nature of the tenure which every man holds to a new umbrella would seem to indicate that lanterns must be lighted with the electric candle to find the man who ever returned a lost umbrella, or one who was willing to relinquish his title to the one he holds by possession, in consequence of any flaw you may point out to him in his title. It would really seem, that, in the general judgment, the umbrella would have to be ignored, in order to save anybody.

But, my hearers, the umbrella is only a casual thing. When a person wants one, he wants it in earnest, and when he does not want one, he does not care who has his, so long as he can borrow a better one of his neighbor when he needs one. The umbrella is not personal property. When it passes out of the hands of the merchant, it becomes common property and is governed only by the law of natural selection.

But this chicanery, and over-reaching, and misrepresentation, which enters into the general business transactions of life is the evil which makes every man distrustful of his neighbor and his neighbor distrustful of him. If we want to buy anything we can see the slightest imperfections which the article exhibits. If we have an article to sell we don't see these imperfections. Cheating is the great element

of success in business. To make a man believe that you are selling a thing for less than its actual value, is the key to money making. To make a man believe that he is charging you for an article more than its actual value, is sharpness in trade, and shows your powers of misrepresentation. The thousand little dishonest tricks in trade are the sources of wealth. There is a diversity in men as to this quality of misrepresentation; one man succeeds by his eloquence, or his flattery combined with cheek, and another man fails, who can tell just as big a lie, but has neither the eloquence or the cheek to overcome his antagonist. The man is smart who can tell you a lie and make you believe it to be truth against your convictions, and you pay him for his smartness, and the man who tells you the truth you refuse to believe, because he is not as good company.

My hearers, we like smart men and rather enjoy being cheated, just to hear the harangue of your smart, flattering, persuasive salesman, and you will trade with him next time out of regard to his smartness. Honesty is a word of doubtful meaning, we hardly recognize it as a dictionary word. The honest good man is a by-word. He is a good fellow to pass a contribution box, or keep a toll gate, or to peddle skim-milk and eggs, but you would never employ him to go out and sell your wares, or to purchase your goods for marketing. It's smartness, not honesty, that pays, and gets paid. The great point in manufacturing is to make goods just as cheap as possible, cheat all you can in the material and then employ somebody to sell it who can tell the biggest,

smoothest lies. A fair exterior to your goods is the thing sought and to fill up the middle with shoddy, with brown paper, with sand, anything to give weight or seeming value and which can be covered from sight by a veil of genuineness. These evidences of dishonesty appear in almost everything we eat, drink or wear.

O world! shoddy world, when will you make it lawful to return borrowed umbrellas and give us honest victuals and clothes. Poets may sing of honest poverty and a' that, but what we want is honest wealth. If poverty cheats you out of a groat, the man is a knave, a cheat. If wealth cheats you out of millions it is the mark of a great mind and of excessive smartness. We, the people of the humbler classes, must be contented to be honest (when we must) and hug the delusion to our bosoms that "honesty is the best policy." But the aristocracy of wealth may go on robbing, as they have done since the world stood, and what is the remedy?

This, my hearers, is the way the world looks at this thing and this is the way the world talks about it. But there is a better sentiment in our natures which rules in the main. There is a feeling of confidence between men and men in the way of deal, in every day transactions which makes us feel that we are brothers, and that, whatsoever we would have men do to us and for us, we must do to and for them. The scramble for wealth goes on in spite of us, and it works out the ends by its own methods. But there is a certain something in our social life which knits us together and makes us feel that we

are among friends in the great battle of life, and that we must stand shoulder to shoulder and lean upon each other with confidence in each other's integrity.

"Then let us pray, that come what may,

As come it will for a' that—

That sense and worth o'er a' the earth

May bear the gree and a' that,

For a' that and a' that.

It's coming yet for a' that,

That man to man, the world o'er

Shall brothers be for a' that."

And so mote it be.



My text on this occasion may be found on page 41, Part V., Sec. I, of the Public Acts of the State of Connecticut, passed January session, 1882: a part of "An Act to Regulate and Restrain the Sale of Spirituous and Intoxicating Liquors."

"All Spirituous and Intoxicating Liquors, which are intended by the owner and keeper thereof to be sold or exchanged, (in violation of law,) shall, together with the vessels in which such liquors are contained, be, and be deemed, a nuisance."

MY INFATUATED HEARERS:—It is right and proper, before entering into a consideration of this text, that I should quote to you the first license law upon record, passed by a "General Courte," in Hartford, in the year 1643.

"Whereas many complaynts are brought into the Courte by reason of diverse abuses that fall out by

severall persons that sell Wyne and Strong Water, as well in vessels on the River, as also in severall houses, for the prevention whereof—It is now ordered that no person or persons after the publishing this order, shall neither sell Wyne nor Strong Water, in any place within these Liberties, without Licence from the particular Courte or any two Magistrates.”

Also at a general Courte in Hartford, April 6th, 1654—“It was also ordered, that, whatsoever Barbados liquors, commonly called Rum, or Kill Devill, or the like, shall be landed in any place of this jurisdiction, or any part thereof, sould, or drawne, in any vessel lying in any harbour or Roade in this commonwealth, after the publication of this order, shall be all forfeited and confiscated to this commonwealth.”

Now, my beloved hearers, compare carefully these court orders passed more than two hundred years ago, with the ten pages of our present License law, and tell me if you can, what progress we have made in dealing with this question.

It is a satisfaction to inform you that the concentrated wisdom of the State, after an experience of more than two centuries, is condensed in this Act, which supersedes and repeals all other Acts, heretofore passed, and we have the whole thing at last in a nutshell.

And now, brethren and sisters, I crave your serious attention while we proceed to analyze this “Act to Regulate and Restrain the Sale of Spirituons and Intoxicating liquors.”

You will observe, first, with what seriousness our learned legislators enact, in the language of my text, that “all Spirituous and Intoxicating Liquors, which are intended by the owner and keeper thereof to be sold or exchanged * * * shall be, and be deemed, a nuisance.” And in token of their honesty they proceed to inform the people how they may proceed to take possession of, and destroy, the liquors, and the casks even, without benefit of clergy. We may therefore take it for granted, that all spirituous and intoxicating liquors in their original and unregenerate state, are “to be, and be deemed, a nuisance” and the majesty of violated law can only be upheld by their total destruction. You will please carry this in your minds as the most consistent and truthful feature of the Act. The whole ten pages, aside from the words of the text, are devoted to Regulating, Restraining, Regenerating, Restoring, Reinstating, this nuisance. So then a good, respectable, conscientious man, who wants to sell, must get five electors, tax payers, not one of whom can own a gin-mill, to sign an application, setting forth that the applicant wants to sell this nuisance to Sunday schools, and sewing societies, and all very nice men, who never get drunk, and, to women too, who feel bad, and that the store where he wants to sell it is two hundred feet from any church or schoolhouse. Then this application must be advertised for two weeks, so that every man can know that the applicant is a good fellow, who wouldn’t sell any unregenerate liquor to his boy, his wife, or his grandfather, when he was told not to. To make sure that none but

deacons or class leaders shall apply for a license, our astute legislators have provided, that any person, a citizen of the town, may send in writing to the county commissioner, who holds the power to grant or withhold licenses, any objection he may have to the applicant as a dispenser of exhilarating beverages, and the applicant must clear away these objections and show a clear record before he can get his license.

And now, my astonished listeners, let me tell you of the wonderful saving grace which regenerates this nuisance and gives it respectability, so that the man who sells it can look you all in the face and say, "You did it." It is the sum of \$100 to \$500, 95 per cent. of which goes into your town treasury, and 5 per cent. into your county treasury, to pay the commissioner for his services. This \$100, my beloved, is the panacea which takes all the nuisance out of spirituous and intoxicating liquor and converts it into a stimulating beverage, fit for nice, sober men and women to drink. How wonderful that our legislators should have thought of it to introduce this into the Act. The Hartford General Council, in 1642, had not thought of this grand scheme of selling indulgences. Had this been left out, the Act would have been very imperfect, and would not have been worth the paper which the original draft was written on. One hundred dollars! What a princely sum for so meagre a privilege granted to a citizen whose character must be so emphatically verified, before he can receive the privilege of selling nectar to the saints.

But, my hearers, mark how these wise legislators hedge about these good honest men, by arrests, fines, and imprisonment, as though when a man had bought this privilege and paid for it they had a right to withhold it.

Here is a list of penalties:—For selling or exposing for sale any spirituous or intoxicating liquors between 12 o'clock Saturday night, and midnight on Sunday, one hundred dollars fine and six months imprisonment—as though a man or woman who wants drink on Friday doesn't want it on Sunday.

Then, for selling to a minor, or intoxicated person, or to a man when his wife has told the seller not to let him have any, fifty dollars fine and sixty days imprisonment. The unkindest cut of all is, that any licensed person who keeps open shop on election day, from five o'clock in the morning to the time of closing the poles, fifty dollars fine. It is a wonder they did not provide that prayer meetings should be held during such days in all bar-rooms.

Then again, a man is liable to fifty dollars fine for keeping his store open from twelve at night to five o'clock in the morning.

How preposterous, that a man who wants a drink on election day can't have it until it is paid for by his vote, and if he happens to be detained and does not get to his hotel until 12:05 a. m., he can't get his drink.

A man would be a fool who would pay from \$100 to \$500 for a horse, and then agree that he wouldn't use it Sundays, nights, or election days, under a penalty of \$50 to \$100. I would not give a fish-hook

for one of these licenses, unless I could have things my own way. How humiliating to a high-minded man who, after passing through the ordeal of an application and paid his license fee and given his bond for three hundred dollars more, signed and endorsed by some bosom friend, and then to be hauled before some petty justice and fined a hundred dollars for giving a drink to a thirsty voter on election day.

Yes, my hearers, my text expresses a truth. "A nuisance"; every page and every section nails the verdict, *nuisance*, to the whole thing, and what an unmitigated folly will this Act to Regulate and Restrain the sale of Spirituous and Intoxicating Liquors be, to future generations, when this stupendous crime against manhood, of selling intoxicating drinks, shall be wiped out.

Shall we live to see this day?

So mote it be.

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